

I pitied those of our party who were too ignorant and unimaginative to be thrilled by such a revelation! Don't laugh at me, Darling, and call me eccentric, original, romantic—but when Uncle asked me yesterday what I should like for a

birthday present, I flung my arms about his neck and whispered—one of those little *Leaning Towers* in alabaster! Belovèd, I can never be thankful enough for having been born with an artistic nature. . . .  
Edith Wharton.

## A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL PUZZLE

### THE 1770 EDITIONS OF GOLDSMITH'S "DESERTED VILLAGE."

Since its first publication *The Deserted Village*, by Oliver Goldsmith, has always been a great favourite with the reading public. At least nine editions were printed in London in 1770, besides an edition, which I have not seen, printed in Dublin. There were six editions issued in a quarto form, printed in large type, and with a pretty engraving of the dilapidated Auburn on the title-page. Of these quarto editions all but the first bear on the title-page or the half-title the words, "Second Edition," "Third Edition," etc. The first quarto edition, the one without such designation, has, until quite recently, been considered the absolute first edition of the poem. In addition to these six editions, which are well known, there were also three others in small octavo, issued by the same printer in the same year, which are practically unknown to the writers on Goldsmith or to collectors of his books. They are really twelvemos (Sigs. A and B, each six leaves), but I shall continue to call them small octavos. Mr. Dobson, in his *Life of Goldsmith*, states that the poem was first published on the 26th of May, 1770, and that the second, third and fourth editions were published in June and the fifth in August of that year. He knew, apparently, only of the editions in quarto.

In the catalogue of a collection of books said to be the library of Mr. Alfred Crampon, of Paris (though, I believe, it is now generally considered that the books were largely from the stock of one or more London booksellers), sold at Sotheby's in June, 1896, there was offered a copy of *The Deserted Village*, containing the following manuscript note:

"This is the genuine first privately printed edition before the 4to of May, 1770. It is the only copy known."

This copy brought £25 at the sale. Shortly after, the late Colonel Grant, whose collection has recently been dispersed at auction, in a communication to the *Athenæum*, pointed out some differences between a small octavo edition to which he had access and the first quarto. He came to the conclusion that the small octavo had been issued before the other.

More than two years ago, having access to a copy of the book in small octavo, I made a comparison of the text with the first quarto, noting every variation in spelling, punctuation or arrangement. There were no differences in text. More than a year afterward, another copy coming into my hands, out of curiosity, without any expectation of discovering any differences, I looked up my old notes, and found that the two editions seemed to be distinct. Borrowing the first copy from the collector into whose library it had passed meanwhile, a more accurate comparison revealed that though textually word for word, page for page, and, with the exception of a single line in the Dedication, line for line, the two were distinct editions, printed from different types and with several points of difference in spelling and punctuation. A comparison of these two with Colonel Grant's notes in the *Athenæum* brought out the fact that his copy must have been of a still different edition. His death and the dispersal of his library brought that book to this country and into my hands.

With the text of these three editions in small type and of the six editions issued

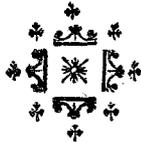
in quarto the same year before me, I endeavoured to make comparisons and deductions which would prove, if possible, which was the real *editio princeps*. My studies led me to believe that the last of the three editions examined was the earliest. I had the entire poem, following this edition in my transcript, drawn

THE  
DESERTED VILLAGE,

A

P O E M.

BY DR GOLDSMITH.



L O N D O N :

Printed for W. GRIFFIN, at Garrick's Head, in  
Catharine-street, Strand.

M DCC LXX.

THE SUPPOSED FIRST EDITION.

off, each of the four hundred and thirty-two lines on a separate sheet, and had written in below every variation from this copy, in text, spelling or punctuation, which occurred in the two other small octavo editions and the six quarto editions of the same year.

In the supposed first edition line 37 reads:

Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's head is seen.

This line is corrected, in all later editions, to read:

Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen.

This is the most important variation and the one pointed out by Colonel Grant. Other points of difference are the following:

Line of the poem.	Supposed first octavo.	The eight other 1770 editions.
8	earch	each
38	sadden's	saddens
66	Unweildy	Unwieldy
151	Wanderings	Wanderings
302	peasants	peasant
401	an	yon

In the Grant copy, the only one of the supposed first edition examined, a line in old ink had been drawn through the "r" in "earch" in line 8, and through the "s" in "peasants" in line 302.

It is generally considered, in comparing similar editions of any book, that the edition with the errors antedates the corrected edition. This was, of course, my ground in coming to the conclusion that I did that this edition antedated the other small octavos and the first quarto.

With the single exception in line 37 in the supposed first edition, the text of the three small octavo editions agrees exactly with that of the first quarto. Changes, however, were made in the text of the second quarto, as follows:

Line of the poem.	First quarto.	Second quarto.
67	luxury	opulence
101	blest is he	happy he
111	sinks	bends
184	ready	steady

These changes, which are perpetuated in all of the four later quarto editions of 1770, seem to prove without question that the three octavo editions antedated the second quarto.

Herewith are reproduced, size of originals, the title-pages of the three small octavo editions. It is only by observing sharply that any difference whatever is

noted. Wording, spelling and punctuation are identical. Differences may, however, be noticed in the types and, more obviously, in the centre ornaments. It will be readily seen that the line transcripts of title-pages, such as are made in the best ordinary bibliographies, do not answer in identifying such distinctions as this. Photographic reproduction only is adequate.

Counting up the variations in spelling, abbreviation and punctuation, I find that the supposed first octavo edition contains one hundred and thirty-three variations not in any of the other 1770 editions. Of these one hundred and twelve are brought about by the substitution of the letter "e" in the later editions for the apostrophe of the supposed first octavo in the past participle, as "destroyed" for "destroy'd," etc. The one I call the second octavo contains only one variation not in any of the others, and my third octavo differs from all the others in only three instances. These two agree with each other, but differ from the first quarto in ninety-seven instances.

The first quarto differs in nine points only from all the other 1770 editions. In seventy-two instances it agrees with the second and third (and generally also with the fourth, fifth and sixth quartos), but differs from all three octavos.

It is thus seen that the three octavos form one class and the three quartos another class. And, if it be taken for granted in bibliography that the edition with the misprints takes precedence over the corrected edition, all three octavo editions must then antedate the first quarto as well as all other quartos.

There are, however, two variations in spacing which seem to controvert the arguments drawn from the variations in spelling and punctuation. In all three octavo editions the new paragraph beginning the description of the ale-house is properly set, the space being between lines 220 and 221. In all the 1770 quartos, as well as in the current editions, this

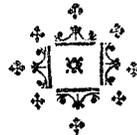
space is between lines 218 and 219, and the two lines

But past is all his fame. The very spot  
Where many a time he triumphed, is forgot,  
which refer to the schoolmaster, who has been described in the preceding paragraph, begin the description of the ale-

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M DCC LXX.

THE SUPPOSED SECOND EDITION.

house. In the three octavos also there is space between lines 408 and 409, and the line,

And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,  
begins a new paragraph. In the quartos there is no space. This line begins what might be called the epilogue of the poem, and it would seem proper that it should

begin a new paragraph. If, as it seems, the quartos are wrongly paragraphed, why did not the author correct them when making the changes which he did make in revising the first and third quartos for the printer? But, perhaps, spacing wrongly or omitting the space entirely are errors which the printer

posed first octavo agrees with the so-called third and differs from the so-called second in only a single instance. The supposed first octavo differs from both the second and third, so called, but agrees with all the quartos in seven instances.

Each quarto seems to have been printed from the one preceding. The variations between the first and second have already been pointed out. The third generally agrees with the second, but in line 108 "his gate" of the first and second quartos becomes "the gate" of the third and later ones. The most important changes were made in the fourth quarto. Lines 81 and 82

Here, as with doubtful, pensive steps  
I range,

Trace every scene and wonder at the  
change,

are omitted entirely, and are not restored in the later editions. "Soft" in line 125 and "Unskilful" in line 147 of the earlier editions become respectively "sweet" and "Unpractised" in the fourth and later quartos. There were no alterations of text in the fifth and sixth quartos. In line 92 the word "Swains" begins with a capital in the fifth edition. In all other editions it is "swains." Line 14 in the sixth quarto ends with an exclamation "made!" It is either a semi-colon or a period in all the earlier editions. I give these points of distinction as, within the past few months, I have examined two copies of *The Deserted Village* which were sold as first editions, one at auction in New York, the other from an English bookseller's catalogue. Both were late quartos with fac-simile title-pages printed on old paper. Others of the same sort may be offered, and should be looked out for by collectors. Of course, no copy with

the alterations in lines 67, 101, 111 and 184, as noted above, could be of the first edition. The text of these lines will fix the authenticity of a copy of the first quarto.

I know of two copies only of the supposed first octavo, one, the Crampon copy, in a private collection in England,

T H E

## DESERTED VILLAGE,

A

P O E M.

BY DR. GOLDSMITH.




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M DCC LXX.

THE SUPPOSED THIRD EDITION.

might easily fall into and which the author might overlook.

To tabulate a little further, I may add that my supposed first octavo agrees with the so-called second octavo, but differs from the so-called third in nine instances. In five of these the first agrees with the first quarto, in four it does not. The sup-

the other, the Grant copy, now in America. Of my so-called second octavo, the only copy of which I know belongs to Mr. William Harris Arnold. It is to be offered for sale at auction, with other books from his library, probably in March. Of the so-called third octavo I have examined three copies, all in private collections in this country. There are doubtless a few other copies of one or the other edition in England or America, but the book in this form is certainly very rare.

When the Crampon copy was offered, it was stated to have been "privately printed." The discovery that there were three such editions in one year destroys that theory. Goldsmith's *The Traveller* was published as a quarto in December, 1764, though the title-page is dated 1765. In the case of this poem also there is a small octavo edition known, of which two copies only seem to be extant. This edition differs very materially from the quarto, however. It is dated 1764, no author's name appears on the title-page, and the Dedication is confined to two lines, while in the quarto it fills nearly four pages.

The composition of *The Deserted Village* was begun as early as 1768, and had been nearly two years in preparation when published in 1770. Indeed, the substance of some lines incorporated in the description of the ale-house appear in a letter written to the author's brother Henry in 1759, and seem to be the earliest specimen of his verse extant. If there were textual differences in these small octavo editions, they might be supposed to have been trial issues, but such is not the case.

Another supposition is that the oc-

tavos are all pirated editions. Professor Masson says that during the latter half of 1770 "the lovely village of Auburn was in all men's fancies, passages from the poem were in every mouth, and the topics, which it suggested of depopulation, luxury and landlordism, were discussed in connection with it." Is it possible that some unscrupulous printer or printers published the book in cheap form, copying even the imprint of the title-page? If such an edition or editions had been issued, the book would be, it would seem, less rare.

In the collected edition of Goldsmith's *Poetical and Dramatic Works*, published in 1780, about six years after his death, *The Deserted Village* is preceded by the statement that the poem was "first printed in 1769." What does this mean? Is it a misprint, or is there an edition of an earlier date still to be discovered?

Some may think that time and space are wasted in making such comparisons. Modern bibliography is an exact science. The bibliography of fifty years ago was not. Rare books are bought now more as treasures, curios, if you please, like gems or paintings or pottery. The earlier book-collectors cared more for the text. Nowadays a rare book must be perfect, or (with a few exceptions) it is of comparatively slight value. Head-lines or catch-words cut into, a half-title or leaf of errata lacking seems to have made little difference to Heber. The book collector who trusts to published bibliographies and collations is likely to be sometimes misled. Exact knowledge in bibliography, like exact knowledge in other sciences, is likely to be ahead of the hand-books.

Luther S. Livingston.

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## VIVE

A dew-drop swung on a rose-leaf red,  
Swayed by the wild wind's breath,  
It sparkled bright in the morning light,  
Though the sun's kiss was death.

It held and jewelled each golden dart  
Fraught with the doom joy won.  
If years mean grief, then let life be brief—  
Die from kiss of the sun.

E. Scott O'Connor.